

On Stage

An exhibit of OBT photography

CONTRIBUTED STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Starting May 4, Portland-based photographer Erik Palmer presents *Revenge Pictures*, the first Pearl District exhibition of his photography of Oregon Ballet Theatre (OBT). The show opens with a First Thursday reception at Torrefazione Italia (1140 NW Everett Street) on May 4, from 6 pm. to 9 pm., and continues until June 1.

A photographer of dancers and athletes, Palmer has documented OBT's rehearsals and performances since his arrival in Portland in 1995. This work represents the physicality, sensuality and spatial qualities of OBT's choreography as components of Palmer's creative concerns.

Among the dances features in *Revenge Pictures*: *Giselle*, Kristy Edmunds' January Postcard, Ashley Roland's *Singe*, Sarah Slipper's *Under Paradise*, George Balanchine's *Agon* and *Serenade*, Trey McIntyre's *White Noise* and *Curupira*, and Oregon Ballet Theatre Artistic Director James Canfield's *Go Ask Alice* and *Illuminations*.

Like much of OBT's repertoire, these photographs expand on classic perceptions of ballet. Rather than communicating a conventional sense of balletic theatricality and fantasy, these dances and these photographs are about physicality, athleticism and risk. They find beauty through unexpected means.

Oregon Ballet Theatre offers an annual season at the Portland Center for the Performing Arts and tours its "Moving Signatures" program regionally and nationally. OBT became the first professional ballet company from Oregon to perform in New York City, when it performed at The Joyce Theater last summer to enthusiastic critical reviews. Through its Portland performance season, touring, education programs, and community outreach, Oregon Ballet Theatre now reaches more than 125,000 people annually.

Aids from page 6

Amazingly, it was discovered that Portland has a Sister City in Mutare, Zimbabwe. Portland efforts in Mutare over the years have focused on teaching new techniques for agriculture as well as development of the local school. A small clinic in the Village of St. Werburg's cares for the community where it is estimated that half of the villagers are infected with HIV. Life expectancy has fallen from 65 years to 39 years since the onset of the AIDS epidemic. Kosmetatos will spend six weeks volunteering at this local village clinic.

Of course, 6 weeks of time will only scratch the surface of need. A powerful series of AIDS in Africa in the *Village Voice*, focusing on the response of the African people and organizations such as the Zimbabwe AIDS Network sparked the idea of holding a benefit to provide financial assistance to these struggling groups. Despite widespread belief that Africa's response to AIDS has been slow and dysfunctional, there are heroic volunteer and community based efforts that have responded throughout African communities. We believe in the importance of supporting these vigorous grassroots efforts by thousands of ordinary Africans to defy all odds and care for their sick, raise their orphans and slow the spread of the virus. By coinciding with the International AIDS Conference, we hope to increase awareness and encourage ongoing support for these organizations and especially for our Sister City, Mutare.

For more information on this event, call 503/233-5484 or visit www.etherimage.com.

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